

MARYLAND  
HISTORICAL



TRUST

William Donald Schaefer  
Governor

Jacqueline H. Rogers  
Secretary, DHCD

January 9, 1989

Carol Ebright  
Division of Archaeology  
Maryland Geological Survey  
2300 St. Paul Street  
Baltimore, MD 21218

Dear Carol:

Sorry to have taken so long in sending the enclosed information on the Ryder family who owned the land that the Higgins site is located upon. I have enclosed the first page of the May 5 interview for reference purposes and the section of the interview pertaining to Jim Harman's recollections of the Ryder family. Jim Harman's phone number is 850-8526 should you have follow-up questions.

I look forward to receiving a copy of your report for the JPPM library and thank you for offering to send a copy. It will be a most significant contribution to Maryland archaeology.

Sincerely yours,

Wayne E. Clark  
Museum Director

WEC:njb  
Enclosure

cc: Jim Harman

Department of Housing and Community Development  
Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum, S.R.2, Box 50A, St. Leonard, Maryland 20685 (301) 586-0050

Anne Arundel County Oral History Project.

Interview II with Jim Harman. Notes by Wayne Clark

May 5, 1988. Interview conducted at JH house in Hanover, Maryland.

JH stated that he use to visit St. Mary's County in the 1920's. He remembers that much of the fieldwork was done by black workers. The farms of that period were mostly 50 acres in area with some as large as 300 acres. The hands were paid only a dollar a day and they had to take the pay as no other jobs existed until the navy bases were established after WWII. The first base was at Indian Head which paid the wonderful fee of a dollar an hour. You could tell those blacks who worked at the base by their packerts or cadillacs next to their traditional one to four room houses.

JH used to go to California in St. Mary's County and then over to the Patuxent to the Seven Cables Hotel which was on an island. He began going here to work in 1928 and was present when a northeaster hit. The storm tide was so high that it washed away the causeway connecting the island to the mainland. JH's father had to come down to wade out over causeway in waist high water. It had rained for 3 days and 3 nights and had amazingly high tidal surge. JH thinks this might have been prior to the 1933 storm. JH worked at the Seven Gable Hotel for a dollar a day as a carpenter. He was related to the Ryker family who ran the hotel. He was a carpenter apprintice who helped build houses during the summer of 1928 and 1929.

I asked JH for clarification about the gravel operations on Charley's Hill. He stated that the gravel operation was started by the Reich brothers who owned land adjoining Charley Smiths land. As their gravel pit expanded, it extended onto Great Uncle Charley's land. When he found out, he and Great Aunt Miriam sued the Reich borthers for damages. After a successful settlement, Uncle Charley allowed the Reich brothers to continue the gravel removal operations, for a fee. The Reich brothers had a team of horses prior to 1928 that they would bring every day from their operations in Catonsville. They had a team of mules, a pair that would pull a scoop that would hold part of (1/3) of a yard of soil with each pass. They could dump the load were ever they wanted. They also back graded to provide ramps. Gravel mining at that time was just plain, hard work. The Arundel Corporation did not exist in the 1920's so they sold their gravel to make concrete for house construction. They sold bank run gravel. After 1928, mechanical equipment replaced the horses.

JH stated that Margaret Disney told him that she used to gather American Chestnuts on Charley's Hill prior to the Chestnut



On the northern side of Kitten Branch and east of the railroad track was the hamlet of Emernanville. This little town had four houses in the 20th century prior to its demise in 1945 when construction of the Baltimore-Washington Parkway closed off the road to the community, thus resulting in its abandonment. The people who lived in this town worked for the Pennsylvania Railroad. Mr. Smith, who was the superintendent of the track gang, had 50 people working for him (JH said what once took 50 people to do is now done with one million dollar machine). White tenants lived in the four houses but the

Jefferson Patterson Park and National Monument is on the National Railroad but not in

JH stated that Caleb Dorsey could ride ten miles without leaving his own property. His house still stands in Elkridge (ed. note: The house was purchased by DNR this year which has plans of leasing it out to someone for free in exchange for them restoring the house).

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JH stated that his Grandfather Harman stated that "nobody ever owned any slaves". The Harmans were hard on the slaves in slavery. They were

Telephone conversation Jim Hamon 2-9-89

Rider Houses located ~~at~~ on road that ran parallel to RR. Began opposite pedestrian bridge at W'house & ran parallel to RR & eventually crossed RR at "Ames Crossing".

Pickers shanty - 1 story frame - on hill above parking lot. Follow road down hill frame house to left and stone house further down road.

Two Rider women lived in house. Two lg rooms downstairs w/ kitchen addition. Hall between 2 rms. Lg 1 rm. cellar with spring (always wet). Two lg bedrooms. Porch on E side. Beautiful lawn w/ flowers & cemetery. Stone Bldg & Smokehouse. Down hill to RR & springhouse at crossing.

Rented the frame house out.

Land farmed by McGuen a Black man. Grew beans, truck farm. Good farm land.

Rider's in Linthicum, Lee R m. a Hamon & had a daughter - a George Rider was also in the area & may still be there.

The Jacksons owned land less than a mile <sup>from RR</sup> on old rd. (Stoney Run?) Black family.

Dick Disney collected lands his daug. Maug. Disney has them.

Rider property ended at Kitten Branch - area across Kitten Branch owned by Kowacki a newcomer to the area.

Rider property went approx to the 170 highway bound.

